

WHITCHURCH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



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MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH

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TELEPHONE-OSWESTRY 113
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YOUR REF.

OUR REF.

*Greenways,
Oswestry,
Shropshire.*

September 9th, 1940

ANNUAL REPORT 1939.

To the Chairman and Members of the Whitchurch Urban District Council.

~~Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,~~

In accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 2067 the Annual Report for 1939 is only an interim report and is confined to essential and urgent matters which have affected the public health during the year.

Your obedient servant,

L. WILSON EVANS.

WATER SUPPLY.

There has been an increased daily average consumption of 32,483 gallons, but no water shortage has been experienced.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

There was a widespread outbreak of measles within 2 weeks of the evacuation of children into the Town in September under the Government evacuation scheme. Three evacuees developed measles soon after their arrival and since there had been no visitation of this disease for six years a considerable epidemic was inevitable and although the notification of measles regulations did not come into force until the outbreak was well established, the records available show that there were over 250 cases. On the outbreak of the disease the Council took prompt measures to warn parents of the dangers of the disease and of the means of dealing with it. Leaflets were distributed and the Empire Marketing Board Posters issued by the Central Council for Health Education were displayed in the Town. A scheme for obtaining adult serum was sanctioned and volunteers asked for. About a dozen generously came forward and the blood was taken and prepared by Dr. Ewart Jones of the Emergency Laboratory, Wellington. Unfortunately the serum was not available until late in the outbreak so that little use was made of it. The disease was fortunately not of a severe type and only one death was recorded for which the early measures to inform the public may have been at least in part responsible.

The response to Diphtheria Immunisation has been very poor. Only one child was immunised during the year. Outbreaks of this disease in the past in Whitchurch have been severe and it is greatly to be regretted that parents do not avail themselves of this safe method of prevention.

EVACUATION.

The evacuation of mothers and children in September presented urgent problems chiefly owing to the unclean condition of and the presence of contagious skin diseases in many of the children. The question of dealing with these children became acute owing to some of the foster parents objecting to having them in billets and the absence of accommodation in institutions in the County. The difficulty was however solved by the energetic action of members of the evacuation committee and the Clerk who procured a house and staff so that these children could be accommodated and treated, and this served a very useful purpose until it was closed at the end of the year.

